

LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
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Vice-Chairperson

Susie Chhoun
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Policy & Governance
Subcommittee Meeting

Monday, January 30, 2023
City Hall – Mayor’s Reception Room
5:30 p.m.

Subcommittee Members Present:	Chairperson Doherty and Ms. Delrossi
School Committee Members Present:	Mr. Lay and Ms. Martin
School Department Personnel Present:	Ms. Phillips, Chief Engagement & Equity Officer Dr. Hall, Chief Operating Officer

Chairperson Doherty called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. and all Subcommittee members were present. The following agenda items were discussed:

- 1. Policy for Procedure on Placing Communications to the Board on the SC Agendas**
- 2. PreK – Registration Timeline**
- 3. Discussion on Preschool Assignment Policy**
- 4. Kindergarten Registration Timeline**
- 5. Professional Staff Hiring Policy & Comprehensive Hiring Policy**

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to take the agenda out of order; seconded by Chairperson Doherty. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Phillips asked what would work for this year regarding Pre-K registration. She stated that all current four (4) years old are eligible. She stated any organization or program are a captive audience and can communicate to families and get materials out and the school department will start pushing that out next week to process. She stated that the applications typically close at the end of April and then it takes about a week. She stated that the first lottery process is in May for Pre-K and then after that it's first come first serve. The second Kindergarten lottery application closes June 7th and the lottery takes the week of June 14th.

Ms. Phillips stated that no date was given to the participants, but they did come and explore our schools/programs.

Ms. Delrossi asked if we have potty training guidelines.

Ms. Phillips stated we do not have a guideline for that and that the only requirement followed is age.

Ms. Delrossi stated that it's a concern because in a regular education setting if the child isn't potty trained it becomes an extra duty for the teacher. She asked if we could maybe include that as a check off box for the parents to check.

Ms. Phillips stated that they will look into that.

Ms. Doherty asked how the lottery comes into play.

Ms. Phillips stated that any student that wants to attend Pre-K and doesn't get a slot in the lottery, they can choose a program with one (1) of the city's partners. She stated that it will be offered if not given that opportunity in the lottery.

Ms. Doherty asked about the lottery and clarified that it takes place the week ending April 24th and the assignments are given out the first week of May.

Ms. Phillips stated that is correct. She stated that the only school that needed a lottery last year was Pyne/Arts school, but everyone else received their first choice and she anticipates the same.

Ms. Doherty stated she had concerns around transportation.

Ms. Martin stated that a letter should be sent for families to get ahead so they can plan.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion to recommend to the full Committee approval of the revised Pre-K policy; seconded by Chairperson Doherty. 3 yeas APPROVED

Ms. Doherty then discussed the Kindergarten registration. She stated that we always have newcomers and that most live in Lowell. She asked aren't we overbooking ourselves in the summer when we don't have the staff.

Ms. Phillips stated that we need to work with our partners to get the information out early. She stated that the 3rd lottery only has 10% of open seats.

Ms. Martin asked if we've had our staff go to our partner's sites to assist.

Ms. Phillips stated yes and we are talking about having mobile registration.

Ms. Delrossi asked if Pre-K students have to register for kindergarten who are presently in Pre-K.

Ms. Phillips stated yes, and that they're able to register online.

Ms. Moffett, School Nurse Coordinator stated that the present registration process has an impact on the health care system. She stated when the registration process started in March the nurses would review and send notices to parents. She stated that nurses don't work in the summer and then if the nurses receive them in bulk when they return it becomes a problem. She stated that Lowell Community Health Center (LCHC) has a waiting list that is several months long and LGH is in the process of closing their immunization clinics which will be tough on parents. She also stated that pharmacies are very expensive for families. She stated that the law states that students need to be immunized for other students' safety.

Mr. Lay stated that he was disappointed it takes up to three (3) months for an appointment and asked if it has to do with staffing.

Ms. Moffett stated yes that staffing is part of the problem.

Mr. Lay asked if students can be made a priority at LCHC.

Ms. Moffett stated that if we send 300 students they can't keep up.

Ms. Martin asked if they can register while they're waiting for their immunizations.

Ms. Phillips stated that those who are impacted are generally those with the greatest need. She stated she has concerns about their access. She stated the district partnered with LCHC to hold a clinic and identified times when parents could go. She stated we need to look at how families can access pharmacies.

Ms. Moffett stated that the cost at a pharmacy is astronomical.

Ms. Martin stated that having a partnership with LCHC is the first thing we should do. She stated that if we have a family that can't get an appointment for two (2) months and have booked that appointment they should be placed. She stated that the district needs to make it as early as we can and provide options for parents.

Mr. Lay asked when parents can go. He asked why LCHC isn't holding COVID clinics.

Ms. Moffett stated that she doesn't know what LCHC has around immunizations. She stated that the registration was previously always been done early and now we have problems with the later date. She stated they're waiting because we are waiting.

Ms. Doherty stated that getting it in by the deadline provides an advantage, but we have seats still at priority schools. She stated that she is looking for a solution that solves all the problems.

Ms. Martin asked Ms. Moffett if April is too late.

Ms. Moffett stated that it will be more beneficial.

Ms. Doherty asked for a breakdown and asked why we are waiting.

Ms. Phillips stated that since the showcase FRC is busy and we should be able to track this. She stated parents know the process is open.

Ms. Doherty then discussed the communications appearing on the school committee agenda.

Ms. Phillips provided the policies and stated that they need to be mindful of other policies.

Ms. Doherty stated that the whole purpose is to have clarity and as Mr. Koocher from MASC informed the Committee that the agenda belongs to the Committee. She stated that all emails from the website should be going to the Committee. She stated that some communities have their own executive secretary to manage the agenda. She stated that in terms of communications that are addressed to the Committee or cc'd she stated that they should be given to the Committee on all matters except for personnel issues. She stated that the Committee has received communications in the past for memorials as an example. She stated that they also received a communication from Ms. Chea that they're still waiting on.

Ms. Phillips stated that when looking at the rules for public comment, they should be aligned with the agenda and should be in writing one (1) week before the meeting. She stated that if it's a good news communication you may people that use this platform as a bill board.

Ms. Martin stated that 1st tier official communication is School Committee related that contains specific information from government bodies. She stated that letters of complaints don't need to go on the agenda, but should go to the Committee. She also stated that for a long time she's been waiting for her emails to be sent to her personal email and the issue has never been resolved. She asked if a proposed policy that marks these out should be created.

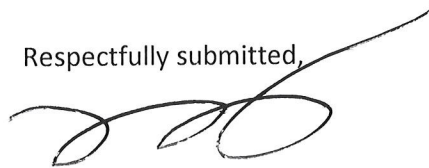
Ms. Doherty stated that we want the community to feel welcome and be allowed for public comments. She stated that they get five (5) minutes to address the Committee.

Ms. Phillips stated that it has been the practice.

Ms. Doherty stated that the public participation policy needs to be updated.

Ms. Delrossi made a motion accept the report as a report of progress and to adjourn at 6:38 p.m.; seconded by Chairperson Doherty. 2 yeas APPROVED

Respectfully submitted,



Ms. Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement
Officer for Dr. Joel Boyd,
Superintendent and Secretary, Lowell
School Committee

LP/mes